

HISTORY OF THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD AT CAPE NOME.

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Mr. HANSBROUGH presented the following

**PAPER ENTITLED THE "HISTORY OF THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD
AT CAPE NOME," BY H. L. BLAKE.**

The following account of the discovery of gold at Cape Nome is the correct and only truthful account ever written. This account is vouched for by over 300 miners and claim owners, both in the Cape Nome, Eldorado, Discovery, and Blake mining districts:

In the summer of 1897 Prof. D. B. Libby, Capt. A. P. Mordaunt, Mr. L. F. Melsing, and H. L. Blake left San Francisco on board the steamer *North Fork* bound for Golofnin Bay. We did not go to Golofnin Bay with the simple hope of finding gold; we were made well acquainted with the fact that gold existed in the vicinity, between Golofnin Bay and Port Clarence, but exactly where we did not know. The information that led us into the country was this: During the years of 1863, 1864, and 1865 the Western Union Telegraph Company sent to Alaska several different parties for the purpose of trying to establish telegraph communication between Russia and the United States, but when the Atlantic cable was laid this undertaking was dropped. Prof. D. B. Libby was a member of the party sent to Port Clarence, from whence the proposed line was to commence; thence to run over the mountains to Golofnin Bay; thence via the coast to St. Michael, and from there down to the United States.

While the party were surveying between Port Clarence and Golofnin Bay they employed many natives and traveled over much rich country. The natives upon several occasions brought into the party some very rich samples of ore, such as silver, lead, and gold, but the survey party could never get them to tell where they found it. They intended to go in search of this gold the first chance they got, but the company suddenly abandoned the project, sent a vessel to Port Clarence, and took the party home. Some of the party were going to return the following summer, but they never returned. Mr. Libby kept the maps, also all notes in reference to this matter, and it was not until the summer of 1897 that Mr. Libby ever thought of organizing a party to go in search of this gold. He imparted this information to Mr. H. L. Blake and others, and in less than ten days from the time Libby gave out this information, backed up by some San Francisco capitalists, a vessel was fitted out with supplies and tools, etc., sufficient to last four men four years.

Upon arriving at Golofnin Bay we began our search. It is not necessary to enter into the details of each and every prospecting trip that we made. Sufficient to say that we penetrated the country in every direction for many miles with reindeer and dogs and natives, and it was late in the fall of 1897 when we first discovered gold. This was on Ophir Creek, in the Eldorado mining district. I was the first man that ever found gold on Ophir Creek.

The next find was made on Melsing Creek by L. F. Melsing, in Discovery district; the next by A. P. Mordaunt; the next by D. B. Libby.

During the time these discoveries were being made we were living at Council City, on the banks of the Neuckluck River. This town was the first town ever established west of St. Michael by American miners. At the time of the discovery of gold there were no other white men in the country except missionaries and traders, though the missionaries are traders more than anything else. They frequently made fun of us for leaving one of the best gold countries in the world and coming to this part of Alaska. But, nevertheless, they never missed an opportunity to either accompany or follow us. After these discoveries were made and the missionaries had staked claims everywhere that we did, we thought they would be satisfied, as they informed us that they did not want the claims for their own personal benefit, but for the future benefit of the poor natives.

My partners and self left our winter quarters at Council City to go to our general quarters at Golofnin Bay and spend Christmas. While on the way down Fish River we stopped at a native village to cook tea, as is the custom in this country. While stopping at this village I met a native by the name of Too rig Luck, whom I had known for some time. He had been visiting other natives at Cape Nome. He called me into his house to show me some rock that he had found in the vicinity of Cape Nome. I looked at the rock and took some of it home and tested it. I found that it carried gold; told my partners and Mr. Hultburg. I decided then to go in search of this ore. So I sent for Too rig Luck and hired him as pilot and guide to take me to this place. The Rev. Hultburg, like the good, true, God-fearing missionary that he was, wanted to get some more gold mines for the poor natives, and asked me if I had any objections to his going with me. I replied, "No; come right along." I was making arrangements to get dog teams from J. A. Dexter, when Hultburg spoke up and said: "You had better take reindeer; they will travel faster, and the whole of the Government herd is at your disposal, if you want them." I had never ridden behind these noble animals, and readily accepted the offer. So six of the best and fastest deer in the herd were hitched up and two native guides and provisions were soon ready, and off we started.

After traveling several days through the most severe storms and cold, with frozen ears, nose, and fingers and toes, we arrived at the place, or close to it. The native at first could not find the place. But he stopped and studied for a while, then pointed to a certain direction and motioned to me to follow. I followed. He led me straight up a very steep mountain, and he suddenly stopped and pointed to the ground, saying "marney," which means "here." I dug down through the snow, got some of the quartz and fetched it to the tent. The next

day I went in another direction only a short distance from this place in search of placer gold. I came to a creek that looked favorable, though I could see but very little of it, for it was frozen over almost completely. But I found several open places, and I panned in many of them, and in every instance I got gold, and in two of the many pans I tried I got very good prospects, though nothing better than I had found in many places. I showed the prospects to Hultburg and told him that I thought it was a rich creek. He said, "Well, shall we stake claims on it?" I replied, "No." That I thought it would be better to return in the spring when the ice had gone, and we could more thoroughly prospect the creek. He thought so too, and suggested that we go home and return in the spring.

The next day we packed up and started for home, and on our return trip we met Lieutenant Jarvis, bound for Point Barrow on a relief expedition to the wrecked whalers. Let me state right here that if ever man deserved credit and reward for a brave and noble and daring deed, Lieutenant Jarvis and his party do.

Upon arriving at Golofnin Bay I tested some of the rock and found it carried gold, and showed my creek samples to my partners. In the spring A. P. Mordaunt took some of the rock to the city and had an assay made. Result, \$6.20 per ton gold.

Now, at this time Anvil Creek had no name, nor did any creek along the coast that we knew of. We kept our secret to ourselves, as per agreement—at least, I did.

As soon as the summer season came I fitted out a large whaleboat, and Mr. Hultburg took two native kiacks and we started off again to the place we had been to during the winter. Mr. Hultburg, for some reason or other which I could not understand, wanted to take two Swedes along that had just arrived in the country. I think they belonged to the same society. But to offset these two Swedes I took two Americans that had just arrived in the country. This made the little missionary white with rage, and he acted ugly and spiteful all the way. The men that he took were Hageline and Brenterson, two very good men. The men I took were Chris. Kimber and Henry Porter.

We started off, and after three days, traveling through stormy head winds and rough sea we arrived opposite the mouth of Snake River. The sea was so rough I could not land in safety, so I kept offshore for several hours, thinking the sea would go down. But it was getting late, and the sea was getting worse. It began raining heavily, and most everyone got very sick in the boat, and they were getting wet and cold, and night was approaching. I was afraid the boat would not live in the breakers if the sea got much worse, so I turned the boat straight for shore with a fair wind. It was blowing a gale by this time, and the breakers were rolling mountains high. I steered right for the mouth of Snake River, and when almost inside of the mouth of the river a large breaker came over our stern and swamped the boat, washing everything and everybody overboard but myself, and the next breaker pushed everything up on a gravel bar in the middle of the river. We all managed to get on the gravel bar and pull the boat over it into smooth water. We picked up our stuff, though nearly everything was spoiled except the flour and bacon. Finally we got the boat and what things were worth saving onto the beach inside the

mouth of the river. This left us very short of grub. We spread our tent, lit a big fire, and dried our clothes and blankets, ate some pancakes, bacon, and tea, and turned in for the night, very tired.

The next day we got up, cooked some pancakes and bacon. We had no tea or coffee. We drank cold water, then put some pancakes in a bag and got in our boat with pick, pan, and shovel, and started up Snake River for the creek we had been to in the winter of 1897, and now known as Anvil Creek. We did not go very far up Snake River before we had to abandon our big boat; she drew too much water. So we pulled the boat up to the bank and fastened it, took our grub, tools, and dog and gun, and started on foot across the tundra or flats for Anvil Creek. After traveling through mud, water, and bog for several miles we arrived at the creek. We all sat down to eat some lunch, for we were very tired. After eating my lunch Mr. Porter said, "Blake, let's see some of your gold." I took the pan and shovel, dug a hole about 18 inches or 2 feet in the gravel, filled the pan with the sand gravel, and washed it out. It showed several fairly good colors, though it did not excite me in the least.

I tried several more pans, with about the same result. Then I handed the pan to Chris. Kimber; told him to try his luck. He tried two or three pans. Result about same. Then the missionary spoke up and said, "Let me try my luck." The pan was handed to him; also the shovel. He took both and started up the creek, saying, "I am going up farther to try it," and off he started, leaving the rest of us sitting down. He was gone fully two hours. I became anxious, as it was getting late, and we had no grub. So I started up the creek to see what was keeping him. He saw me coming, picked up his pan and shovel, and started toward me. As soon as we met I said, "Well, what luck?" He replied in his broken English, "Dey is not any gold up dare." I said, "I do not think that you have half tried." He replied, "Yes, I am sure I have, but I could not even get a color." "Well," I said, "we are out of grub, and it is useless for us to attempt to prospect unless we do it right. Let us go home to the boat and go up to Marys and get some more grub and come back to-morrow and give this creek a through prospecting." He did not approve of this. He said he was not coming back to this creek, but suggested that before we go back to the boat we go on up Snake River farther and try it. I told him then that it was too late to think of it. But he seemed so anxious to try Snake River, and so did the rest of the boys, that we all agreed to go.

We got to Snake River late in the afternoon. I found what looked like a favorable-looking place, took my pan and shovel, and tried several pans of gravel, and got color in every pan. Hultburg for some reason was not much interested in the prospects, and suggested that we start back to our boat. I agreed with him that this was the wisest thing to do. So back we went, and Hultburg would not go back the same way we came; said he could find a shorter way. The two Swedes sided with him. So he and the two Swedes took one way and Porter and Kimber followed me. Hultburg lost his way in the dark, as I told him he would. Porter, Kimber, and myself got back to the boat about midnight, but Hultburg, Brenterson, and Hageline had not shown up. I thought perhaps they had gone on down to the tent, at the mouth of Snake River, so I told my men to get in the boat and we would go down Snake River to the tent. We arrived at the

tent early in the morn, very hungry and tired, but Hultburg, Brenterson, and Hageline had not arrived. I became alarmed, knowing that Hultburg was a very poor traveler and a poor guide. Furthermore, he was a very sick man at all times. We cooked some pancakes, jumped into the boat, and started back to look for them. We had not gone more than 2 miles from the tent when we saw them coming. Brenterson and Hageline were carrying Hultburg. He had given out completely. I soon got them into the boat, and took them back to the tent. As soon as they arrived at the tent and had something to eat they went to bed, completely tired out. Mr. Hultburg began to cry. I asked him what was the matter. His only reply was, "My poor wife and children." I said, "They are all right." "Well, I must go home and attend to my mission duties," he said.

The next morning we packed our boat and set sail for Sinrook River, about 15 miles up the coast from the mouth of Snake River, bound for Mary's place, at the mouth of Sinrook. Mary is a half-breed Russian, and the wife of a reindeer man, and they generally had plenty of supplies, and we knew her, and knew we could get grub enough to last us until we could get home.

When we arrived at the mouth of Snake River, to our surprise we found several white miners camped at the mouth of Sinrook. Mr. Hultburg asked Mary who they were. She replied that they were white men from Kotzebue Sound, and that they had found lots of gold. Mr. Hultburg asked me what I thought of it. I told him I did not know what to think. In fact, I said, I do not want to go on any wild-goose chase; I always depend on myself in such cases, though I think we had better not bother with it just now, but keep to our original plan, get some grub from Mary and go back to Snake River, and try the creek more thoroughly that we have just left (meaning Anvil), for we do know that there is gold there. Mr. Hultburg replied that Anvil Creek would keep until we returned, and urged me to go up Sinrook River and see what there was. In fact, more of the boys wanted to go. So I yielded and consented to go and investigate. We packed our native skin boats and all started. We had not gone far when Mr. Hultburg shammed sickness, and said he could not go any farther. I stopped, gave him the tent and grub enough to last him until I returned, and went on up the river. This was just what he had been playing for. I really believed him to be sick. So I told Henry Porter to stop with him until I returned. I gave him the tent and stove, and slept out in the rain myself.

Now comes the time when he played me. I had not been gone more than one day when this sly, crafty, avaricious, God-fearing, Eskimo-loving missionary fooled me. He got a boat from some white men at the mouth of Snake River, slipped off in the night, left Porter alone in the tent, and went directly to Golofnin Bay, got two more Swedes, Lindbloom and Linderburg, and a small sailboat, and drew a map of the place, told them exactly where we had been and exactly where to go, gave them his power of attorney, and off they started, taking the power of attorney of every Swede missionary in the vicinity, and located the whole country.

I spent several days up in the mountains and head waters of Sinrook prospecting. It rained nearly all the time. I caught a very severe cold from sleeping out in the rain; my boots were worn out. We did not find anything. Our provisions were used up, for we were gone

much longer than we intended to be. So we returned to the mouth of the river. Finding Hultburg had mysteriously left, I did not know what to think, but I did not suspect him of any trickery at the time. The weather was stormy, raining every day; the creeks were badly swollen, and our supply of provisions almost gone again. I decided to return to Golofnin Bay and come back with more supplies as soon as the weather moderated some, and all agreed that this was the best to do. So we went back to Golofnin Bay more dead than alive.

Upon arriving at Golofnin Bay, I was informed by P. H. Anderson that Hultburg had gone back to Sweden. I found letters at Golofnin Bay that demanded my presence in St. Michael. I postponed my trip back to Anvil Creek and went to St. Michael, and told the boys that just as soon as I returned from St. Michael we would fit out the boat again and go back, and the weather would be much better then. They all agreed. Chris. Kimber and Porter went up to Council City to wait until I returned, in good faith. Brenterson and Hageline hung around the mission until I had gone to St. Michael, then they went back to Anvil Creek and staked claims, saying nothing to Porter and Kimber, the two Americans who had gone to Council City in good faith to wait.

I returned from St. Michael after about two weeks' absence, and met Lindbloom, Linderburg, Brenterson, and Hageline. Some of them had just returned from Cape Nome, but at this time I did not even know that they had been to Cape Nome during my absence. Lindbloom was at Golofnin Bay, and even went up Fish River to Council City with me in my boat, but never so much as even mentioned the fact that he had been to Cape Nome and located the ground that I had discovered.

On my return from St. Michael I fetched over a man by the name of Gabe Price, one of C. D. Lane's prospectors. I had told him about finding gold at Cape Nome, and he was going to Cape Nome with me. I also took him to Council City with me. During the trip up Fish River to Council City he became acquainted with Lindbloom. I landed them all safe at Council City, and the next day showed Price where he could get a good claim, being recorder of the district at the time. The next day he and Lindbloom sneaked off from Council City in a boat, not letting me know a thing about their going. I thought this very strange of Price, but even then did not suspect where they had gone, for I knew that neither one of them knew the place unless someone had told them. Price said in his letter which he sent back to Council City that he was very sorry he did not have my power of attorney or he would have located me a claim. I thanked him, and told him I did not want any power of attorney claims, though he managed to stake claims for others out in the States without their power of attorney.

I have been asked by many why I did not locate on the creek when we first found gold. I might as well ask why Hultburg did not. The reason was this: I did not want to stake a claim that I was not sure was good; neither did Hultburg. I am not a land locator, but I am a mining claim locator, when I know the ground is good. I did not want to stake a claim blindly, and afterwards find that I had staked a blank. Furthermore, I did not fear anything, for I was fully aware of the fact that there was not another living soul on earth that knew anything of the creek but Hultburg, and he knew absolutely nothing,

nothing about the richness of a claim; he scarcely knew gold when he saw it; he had never so much as seen a gold pan before he met me. He came from Sweden to Chicago, found employment with the Pullman Car Works as laborer, joined the Salvation Army, then the Mission Society, and was sent to Alaska.

I have been asked what Mr. Hultburg's motive was in deceiving and tricking me. I can only answer that question as follows: He knew perfectly well that I knew he was not a citizen of the United States, and that, in order to get a claim, or any portion of a claim, it was absolutely necessary for him to get someone else to locate the ground and give him a one-half interest for the information, and by sending his own country people to locate the ground he might possibly secure interests in many claims. It has been stated by some that Lindbloom made the discovery; by others, that Linderburg and Brenterson and Hageline made the discovery. I wish to state that not one of these men were in this country at the time the discovery was made, and Lindbloom only arrived in the country about the time I returned from my second trip to Cape Nome. A. N. Kettelson never saw the country until long after I returned from my second trip. He was herding reindeer at Port Clarence for \$800 a year, and provided himself.

(I was with Mr. H. L. Blake on this prospecting trip and certify to the truthfulness of this statement.—H. L. Porter, Council City, February 17, 1899.)

It has been asserted by some papers that Laplanders many years ago made discoveries of gold in Alaska and imparted the information to the missionaries. This is absolutely not so. There never were any Laplanders in Alaska prior to 1896, about the time of the introduction of reindeer into the country, and up and until 1897 there were only two, namely, Johann Lornensis and Nickel, and they never had been in the vicinity of Cape Nome. It has also been asserted by the same paper that the missionaries knew of the existence of gold through the natives. Very strange that they did not find and locate it long ago, before we came to the country. They had been in the immediate vicinity of the now famous mines for from ten to fifteen years.

LOCATING BY POWER OF ATTORNEY.

The people on the outside are not familiar with the real question at issue. We claim that there never was a law written permitting locations to be made by power of attorney, nor was there ever a law written prohibiting it. We believe that it has been the custom and practice of the Land Department to accept locations thus made, providing the power of attorney was legally and properly executed in every respect. But we do not believe that the Land Department or the General Government ever, for one moment, intended or will permit of the manner and method by which half of the claims have been located. The following is a copy of a so-called power of attorney that was used to locate claims under:

ST. MICHAEL, December 18, 1899.

I, the undersigned, make, constitute, and appoint ——— (name), of Golofin Bay, my agent, to locate, stake, and record placer and quartz claims for me, and in my name and stead, in Alaska.

JOHN PETERSON.

Witness:

HANK SMITH.

Let me ask the public, could any person obtain a patent for a claim located under this power of attorney? What assurance has the Land Department that the person giving this power of attorney was a citizen, or that he had declared his intention to become one? Or what assurance that the person accepting it was one, or had declared his intention to be? This is the sort of power of attorney that we are fighting, not the power of attorney that is legally executed. And it is safe to say that fully one-third of the claims are located under just such papers, and held by the United States commissioner as being legal. Furthermore, the law requires that before a location can be legally made mineral must be found. And most of us know full well that half the people who located never tried to find mineral, but just staked and recorded their claims. We furthermore think that any method of locating under that is not good and sufficient to obtain a patent—is not good enough to hold and operate a claim under.

H. L. BLAKE.

Following is a list of names of some of the Laplanders and others that L. B. Shepard went through the performance of naturalizing:

Jafet Wiskeler, alias J. Lindburg, reindeer man, July 30, 1898.

Ole Krogh, Lapp., July 30, 1898.

J. P. J. Stalogarg, July 30, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Ock Hatta, October 5, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Fredk. Larsen, October 22, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Chris. Carlsen, November 12, 1898.

Wm. A. Kjillman, November 13, 1898, superintendent reindeer herd, Swede.

A. S. Milina, November 30, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

S. S. Josefen, November 30, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Otto Grevina, November 30, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Mathias Mittka, November 30, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Severana Lervan, December 3, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Andras Johnsen, December 19, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

Per. Anderson, December 19, 1898, Lapp. reindeer man.

A. Klemmetsen, January 7, 1899, Lapp. reindeer man.

Tsak A. Boango, January 7, 1899, Lapp. reindeer man.

Pier Larsen Artic, January 7, 1899, Lapp. reindeer man.

John Sanstran, January 23, 1899, Lapp.

John Ohren, February 3, 1899, Lapp.

Neil Perrin Balls, February 3, 1899, Lapp.

Johan J. Torwenson, February 11, 1899, Lapp.

Peir M. Spein, February 11, 1899, Lapp.

There are probably 100 others, but these are all men who left the Government reindeer herd to locate claims at Nome and then went to the commissioner and declared their intentions, though not one of these would declare his intentions to become a citizen until he found himself in possession of a good, rich American gold mine.

H. L. BLAKE.

I make this statement without fear, and, furthermore, challenge successful contradiction.

H. L. BLAKE.

The following is a copy of G. W. Price's letter to John Cooper, after running away from me at Council City:

JOHN COOPER, *Council City*:

You had better leave Buster to take care of your camp there, and take his power of attorney, and you and Bull Benn start for Nome City. That is where we just came from, and have found very good prospects. Show Mr. Blake this letter, and

he may go with you. Several men will start from here soon, among them Eric O. Lindbloom, and he will give you all the pointers about where to locate when you get there. Blake has been at the place before, and he will tell you where to go. It is the third river above Cape Nome, and about 10 miles this side of Sledge Island. Take only provisions enough for three weeks, make locations, and return again. We left our schooner at the river, and you can see her masts from the beach. It is where Blake made his famous landing. He will know the place. It is 15 miles above Cape Nome.

Frank has not been heard of since he started for St. Michael, and the opinion is that he is caught in the ice at St. Michael.

I hope you and Bill, also Mr. Blake, will start at once. Do not make this known too much, but we took \$352.60 out of my claim in one day with one rocker, and \$1,800 in five days with two rockers. Blake can let his partners and friends in on it, but I think it advisable for him to go first himself.

Yours, very truly,

G. W. PRICE.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *District of Alaska*, ss:

Capt. Frank Osborn, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that in the month of September, 1898, he arrived at St. Michael with the schooner *Chessan*, being one of the owners of said schooner and captain of same at the time above mentioned.

That one Gabe Price was a passenger on board said schooner, having left Kotzebue Sound, where said schooner sailed from. That said Gabe Price was one of many grub-staked men sent to Kotzebue Sound by C. D. Lane et al. in 1898. That on account of his not having found any gold or other valuable metal he became very much disheartened, and very shortly after C. D. Lane left Kotzebue Sound said Gabe Price decided to return home to California, thoroughly disgusted and discouraged with the whole country. That while stopping at St. Michael, awaiting an opportunity to leave St. Michael on some outgoing vessel, he was introduced to one H. L. Blake by a Dr. Townsend, of New York, who informed said Blake that said Price was trying hard to make a mark in the mining world for himself, and to raise himself in the estimation of C. D. Lane, whereupon said Blake took said Price into his confidence and gave him much valuable information about the Golofnin Bay and Cape Nome countries.

That said Price came back to the schooner *Chessan* after his interview with Blake and informed affiant, also J. Cooper, W. Johnson, and W. Binn, of Mr. Blake's kindness and valuable information and his generous offer to take Mr. Price to Golofnin Bay and have him stop with him during the winter and accompany him on some of his proposed prospecting trips during the winter, which offer was cheerfully accepted and very highly appreciated; that said Price did go with Blake to Golofnin Bay on board a small schooner, the *Fram*, and owned by Mr. J. C. Dreen, who had left the schooner in Mr. Blake's charge; that upon arriving at Golofnin Bay from St. Michael, Blake took Price, Cooper, and Eric O. Lindbloom up Fish River to Council City, in the Eldorado mining district, and, being recorder of said district at the time, soon put Price in the way of getting a claim, which he did two or three days after his arrival at Council City; that after securing such information from H. L. Blake concerning the Cape Nome country as he desired, he quietly arranged with said Eric O. Lindbloom to slip away from Council City unknown to said Blake, whom he had previously arranged to go with, and proceeded directly to Cape Nome; that after arriving at Cape Nome on board the Swedish Mission schooner, accompanied by Eric O. Lindbloom, Jafet Wiskler, John Brynston, and several Lapland reindeer herders from the Government reindeer herd, they immediately located the ground that Blake had told Price about and that he had previously arranged to go with Price too.

After Price, the Laplanders, and the others above named arrived at the place described by Blake, and now known as Snake River and Anvil Creek, they located all the claims they possibly could for themselves and their friends in California and elsewhere by fraudulent powers of attorney and otherwise. Price wrote a letter to Blake and told him he had found the place he had described to him, and made many locations, and that he was very sorry that he did not have his (Blake's) power of attorney, or he would have located a claim for him.

Affiant furthermore sayeth that said Price had promised that in the event of his finding anything in either the Golofnin Bay or Cape Nome country, through the information given him by Blake, that the two first men on earth that he would stake claims for would be myself and Blake, for the many kind and charitable acts bestowed upon him by Blake and myself; that said Price did not pay his passage to St. Michael on the schooner *Chessan*, but begged me to take him to St. Michael, which I did.

Affiant furthermore saith that Price begged tools and provisions from me to go to the Cape Nome country with and has since conveniently forgotten to return.

Affiant furthermore saith that said Price assisted in preventing the American miners of Golofnin Bay from reaching the Cape Nome country, so that the Laplanders and Swedish missionaries might locate everything first, with the hope of finally acquiring possession of the locations made by these ignorant people.

FRANK OSBORN.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of October, 1899.

[SEAL.]

E. R. BEEMAN,

Notary Public, District of Alaska, U. S. A.

Affidavit of Manuel Bartoni.

NOME, December 27, 1899.

Manuel Bartoni being first duly sworn, deposes and says: First. That he arrived at St. Michael, from San Francisco, in the summer of 1897 on board the steamer *North Fork*. That one H. L. Blake was a passenger on board said steamer. That after discharging our freight and passengers at St. Michael said Blake, D. B. Libby, D. F. Melsing, and A. P. Mordaunt remained on board said steamer, which went direct Golofnin Bay and there landed all of the above-named persons. That the said D. B. Libby was one of a party who in the year 1865 or 1866 was employed by the Western Union Telegraph Company in constructing a telegraph line from Port Clarence to the Yukon River via either the Fish or Neuck-Luck River. That while assisting in the survey of some suitable route for said telegraph line, gold was discovered on some of the streams tributary to the head waters of the Neuck-Luck River. That the said Blake, Libby, Mordaunt, and Melsing built their winter supply quarters at Chingik at the head of Golofnin Bay, and their winter prospecting quarters on the banks of the Neuck-Luck River. That during the winter of 1897 reports reached St. Michael by one J. A. Dexter that the four above-named miners had made discoveries of gold on both of the following rivers, namely, Ophir Creek and Melsing Creek, which proved true.

That in the month of December, 1897, said H. L. Blake started from Golofnin Bay, taking with him one O. N. Hultburg to what is now known as the Cape Nome mining district, on a prospecting trip. That during the summer of 1898 I was employed by L. B. Shepard as watchman for the N. A. T. & T. Co. That during the time I was in the employ of said company—I think it was in the month of either July or August, 1898—said O. N. Hultburg arrived at St. Michael from Cape Nome, where he had just come from and had left said Blake. He was very much excited and asked me where he could find said Shepard, and I told him. Very shortly after I heard said Hultburg telling Mr. Shepard that he and Mr. Blake had found gold on some stream about 15 or 20 miles west of Cape Nome, and he particularly impressed upon said Shepard the importance of secrecy, because, as he (O. N. Hultburg) stated, he had promised said H. L. Blake that he would maintain perfect secrecy. I furthermore heard said Hultburg tell or ask one Dr. Gregory to give some person his power of attorney. Mr. Hultburg spoke several times of the hardships of the trip, and how they suffered from hunger. During the conversation between L. B. Shepard and Hultburg I heard said Hultburg speak of said H. L. Blake in the highest terms of respect, and that if said Blake knew that he had told any person of those discoveries that he would lose confidence in him. I heard said Shepard reply that he would not mention it.

I arrived at Cape Nome in the summer of 1899 and heard many people claiming that the new gold fields were discovered by one O. N. Hultburg, the Swedish missionary. This I know to be absolutely false, for I heard the missionary plainly say that Mr. Blake first found gold on the streams of the Cape Nome district in the year 1897. Hultburg knew this, because he accompanied Mr. Blake in 1897, and while Mr. Blake was out in the hills prospecting Mr. Hultburg remained in the different houses of the natives trading for anything and everything he could trade for, such as seal skins, fox skins, boots, pieces of ivory, grease, seal oil, dried fish, or anything he could convert into money.

I make this statement in the interest of truth and fairness to Mr. Blake, knowing and believing full well from Mr. Hultburg's own conversation that Mr. Blake is the person to whom all credit is due for the discoveries of gold both on the Cape Nome, El Dorado, and Blake districts. I furthermore think from all that I can learn that O. N. Hultburg, the missionary, served Mr. Blake a very cowardly and shabby and

unprincipled trick in sending a number of Swedes and Laps to locate the ground he had agreed to keep secret until Mr. Blake was ready to return.

MANUEL BOTANA.

Witness:

E. S. KEITH.

Affidavit of D. H. MacDonald.

Anvil City, September 13, 1899.

D. H. MacDonald, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: First, that on or about the 16th day of July, 1898, while stopping at St. Michael, I became acquainted with Mr. H. L. Blake, who had just returned from a prospecting trip from what is now known as the Cape Nome mining district, Alaska. That I asked said H. L. Blake if he had found any gold in that section. That said Blake told me he had, and that on many of the streams in that region gold could be found in paying quantities, and asked me as well as others to go with him and more thoroughly prospect; that he was so lonesome, there being no white men in that section of the country at that time, other than a trader and a Swedish missionary. That he was afraid to trust the missionary, for he had deceived him on several occasions, which statement I found out later to be true. That while said Blake was in St. Michael on business, O. N. Hultburg, the Swedish missionary quietly arranged with the United States commissioner to naturalize some 20 or 30 Laplanders, and give each one his and also the United States commissioner's power of attorney, then to hasten to Cape Nome and stake all the claims they possibly could before said Blake could return from St. Michael, knowing full well that said H. L. Blake was going to inform several American friends of his at St. Michael.

Further affiant saith not, except that this statement is made in the interest of truth and fairness to the original discoverer of gold in the Cape Nome mining district.

DAN. H. MACDONALD.

Witness:

W. F. PILGRIM.

Affidavit of George W. Bennett et al.

In July, 1898, H. L. Blake outfitted a large whaleboat at Golofnin Bay with provisions, implements for prospecting, etc., bound for what is known as Snake River, west of Cape Nome and tributaries. He took Hultburg, Brynteson, Hagalin, Porter, and Kimber as members of his crew.

The Independent Mining Company's boat towed Blake's boat out of Golofnin Bay, and Blake said he was going to a point on the coast west of Cape Nome to prospect a river and its tributaries, now designated Snake River.

He wanted those on the Independent Mining Company's boat to join his expedition, for the reason that gold existed there, and that he had found it on several streams in the winter of 1897.

The expedition by H. L. Blake was prior to any reports we had ever heard pertaining to the sections named by Blake and where he said gold could be found.

Further affiant saith not except that this affidavit was made in the interest of truth and correct information as to the original finding of gold in said locality and by whom found and first reported.

A. PETRY.

GEO. W. BENNETT.

FRED OLSON.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this — day of —, A. D. 1899.

Notary Public, District of Alaska, U. S. A.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *District of Alaska, ss:*

John Waterson, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: That during the month of July, 1898, he was one of the crew of the bark *Alaska* bound for and on a whaling voyage in the Arctic Ocean; and that one Captain Coogan was the master, and one

Eric O. Lindbloom was one of the crew on said bark and shipped with affiant as a member of said crew from San Francisco, Cal. That owing to severe treatment by said Captain Coogan and other hardships of said voyage said Eric O. Lindbloom and affiant decided to desert the said bark at Port Clarence, Alaska, and in the month of July, 1898, did desert said bark and started along the coast in a skin boat, made by natives, for Golofnin Bay. That having no provisions other than what fish we could get at the mouth of Sinrock River the natives supplied us with fish and we continued on our voyage. We had no pan, pick, shovel, or implement of any kind and did not prospect for gold or discover any place of prospecting, and did not meet any white man on our trip.

At Chindik, situated at the head of Golofnin Bay, we were given shelter at the Swedish Mission by O. N. Hultburg, who employed us to go up Ophir Creek in Eldorado mining district to work on a claim owned by Hultburg. At Ophir Creek we were much about the cabin of H. L. Blake, D. B. Libby, A. P. Mordaunt, and L. F. Melsing, and we heard said Blake telling his partners about gold discoveries he had made at a point 15 to 20 miles west of Cape Nome. Said Blake said a creek came in by a mountain on the top of which was a rock anvil, which landmark was very conspicuous from the coast. That thereafter said Eric O. Lindbloom left said Ophir Creek to see Hultburg and tell him what Blake had reported to his partners. Hultburg sent Lindbloom as one of a party for the place designated by Blake to stake claims, but I, affiant, was not included, as Hultburg, Lindbloom, and others spoke the Swedish language, which I did not understand, and I was left to my own resources from and after that time. Later I met said Lindbloom and said Lindbloom told me that he and others had gone to the place said Blake had described; that they had named the river Snake River, owing to its winding course, and that they named the tributary Anvil Creek, owing to the rock anvil which said Blake had described. He said they found plenty of gold on Anvil Creek and staked plenty of claims.

Further affiant saith not, except that this affidavit was made in the interest of truth and correct information as to the original finding of gold in said locality and by whom found and first reported.

JOHN WATERSON.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of October, A. D. 1899.

J. ARGENT ARMITAGE,

Notary Public, District of Alaska, U. S. A.

(Internal-revenue stamps, 26 cents.)

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